

Statement of Edward J. Markey On CAFÉ amendment

The more things change, the more they stay the same. We are here once again to debate an energy bill that misses the mark, especially with respect to conservation. The basic facts about why we need to increase fuel economy are exactly the same as they were 2 years ago:

- Two thirds of all the oil we use **is consumed by the transportation sector – in the cars and light trucks that we drive.**
- In 1975, Congress passed a law signed by President Gerald Ford that mandated that fuel economy had to double from 13 miles per gallon to almost 27 miles per gallon by 1985. The car companies got it done – in ten years, they made cars twice as efficient. But, we are now moving backwards, since **the fleetwide average fuel economy peaked in 1987 at 26.2 miles per gallon, and has now fallen back to under 25 miles per gallon, ROUGHLY THE SAME LEVEL WE WERE AT IN 1981!**
- The situation in Iraq continues to be unstable, and we continue to be told that we need to pass this bill in order to assure our energy security and our national security.

But in the past 2 years, some things **have** changed:

- Oil prices have spiked to almost \$58 a barrel, up from less than \$25 two years ago.
- OPEC is saying it has almost maxed out its production capacity, while China's demand for oil is growing at a rate that is seven times that of the US.
- Gas prices are up to \$2.22 a gallon for regular – almost 50 cents higher than they were last year.
- A message posted to a jihadist message board calls upon Mujahideen everywhere to attack not just people, but oil wells and pipelines, arguing that "the killing of 10 American soldiers is nothing compared to the impact of the rise in oil prices on America and the disruption that it causes in the international economy."
- A group of national security hawks have teamed up with environmentalists to state that "U.S. dependence on foreign petroleum poses a serious risk to our national and homeland

security as well as our economic well-being” and call for a 50% oil reduction by 2025.

- Automakers have agreed to a voluntary deal that amounts to an increase in fuel economy standards in Canada by 25% even as they fight all efforts to do the same here.
- Sales of hybrid vehicles are so strong that the Washington Post has urged that Virginia stop letting solo drivers of hybrids use the HOV lanes because traffic is getting clogged up.
- And everyone – from Alan Greenspan to Frank Gaffney, both well-known tree huggers – is talking about the need to reduce our dependence on oil.

Despite all this, the bill in front of us does NOTHING to ensure that the fuel economy of the cars and SUVs we drive is increased.

Several years ago, the National Academy of Sciences published a report that identified 17 technologies that could allow cars, SUVs and pickups to achieve this improvement *without harming automobile safety*. Their analysis doesn't even consider hybrids or diesel technology, both of which can improve fuel economy by up to 50 percent.

All this amendment does is raise automobile fuel economy standards to 33 miles per gallon by 2015, a level that the National Academy of Sciences report shows is easily achievable. Beginning in 2015, it would save 10 percent of the gasoline the nation would otherwise burn. **And the amendment also calls on NHTSA to do this without adversely impacting automobile safety, and to maximize job retention in the U.S. automotive sector.**